



Eidgenössische Technische Hochschule Zürich
Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zurich

Laudatio for Professor Andries van Dam

It is a tremendous honor and pleasure for ETH Zürich and for the department of Computer Science to present an honorary doctorate degree to Professor Andries van Dam. Prof. van Dam is a leading authority in computer graphics and interactive user interface technology. He is one of the few pioneering researchers who developed, shaped and inspired the field continuously over a period of almost 40 years. He stands as a role model for generations of young researchers and scholars in Computer Graphics and beyond. The spectrum of his research achievements includes graphics systems, image synthesis, human-computer interfaces, programming models, standardization, electronic books, and virtual reality.

Prof. van Dam's pioneering research on the use of computer graphics technology to facilitate human computer interaction contributed significantly to the development of modern user interfaces and window systems. Many of the concepts employed by the interactive user interfaces used throughout the world today can be traced back to his initial work and experiments. His visionary thinking was fundamental to the research and development of user interfaces in Computer Science.

Prof. van Dam recognized very early that the only way to bring 3D graphics to the masses was through standardization. He initiated and coordinated many of the early standardization efforts and contributed substantially to communication and concurrency mechanisms between the main CPU and the graphics subsystem. Thanks to his early efforts, 3D graphics hardware has become an integral component of every personal computer.

With Prof. van Dam we also honor an exceptionally gifted, talented, and renowned teacher who educated generations of students in Computer Graphics as well as in the fundamentals of Computer Science. Alongside his other accomplishments he authored a famous textbook on "Fundamentals of Interactive Computer Graphics: Principles and Practice" that continues to serve as a reference in the field.

Prof. van Dam's service to Computer Science has been of paramount value to the development of our discipline. He helped found the Association for Computing Machinery's (ACM) special interest group on graphics which led to the inception of ACM SIGGRAPH. He has been a scientific advisor to numerous of the world's largest companies in information technology. His work and achievements have been honored by many awards and fellowships.

With Prof. van Dam we finally honor an outstanding computer scientist and a leading authority in graphics and interactive systems. We are very pleased to present this award to a dedicated researcher and a gifted teacher committed to the highest standards in our profession.